

partie, mais pas tout à fait parfaitement, avec la figure du démon romantique, par une hybridation pertinente, d'une manière originale surprenante à Eminescu. A un seul endroit, l'historien littéraire est plus explicite: « Notre interprétation va tenter de révéler le sens en pénétrant la sédimentation des isotopes et la stratification des symboles, de sorte que finalement la profondeur insondable du substrat ontologique soutenant le poème d'Eminescu soit révélée pleinement » (Vanhese, 2014 : 216). En outre, la ligne comparative relative au *Serpent* de M. Eliade est séduisante, et elle est reflétée dans la section *Une Hierogamie caché de Luceafărul*. Il y a aussi quelques modifications inhérentes, qui se rapportent à la dimension ethno-folklorique, mais sans être le tour de force de l'exégète de Calabre, car le mort-vivant d'Eliade ne s'identifie pas au *zburător*... de Heliade (!). En effet, la multitude des divinités anciennes qui se trouvent à l'origine des significations hyperioniques (Tammuz, Adonis, Osiris, Zagreus, Dyonissos), rappelées par l'auteur, convergent vers Andronic, le symbole de l'homme suprême. Elle conclut ensuite avec un certain aplomb critique: « Diffusant dans son roman entier les allusions intertextuelles liées au poème *Luceafărul*, Eliade parvient à révéler le côté obscur, éliminé par le poète du chef-d'œuvre publié en 1883, qui peut être restitué seulement à l'aide d'une analyse génétique (...) » (Vanhese, 2014 : 185). Vers la fin du volume, l'écrivain cherche à propager ses hypothèses critiques sur la ballade *Miorița*, ou créer des liens intertextuels avec les vers de Veronica Micle, pas toujours avec succès. D'autre part, l'étude révèle la beauté absolue du *zburător*, comme une empreinte indubitable du poème d'Eminescu, mais aussi la perpétuation d'un mythique âge d'or, également identifiable dans l'île d'Euthanasius. En ce sens, presque circulaire, on met fin aux interprétations subtiles et parfois alambiquées de l'interprète italienne G. Vanhese: « Le fil des idées qui donne importance au volume que nous analysons est lié à la reconfiguration de la série des portraits masculins d'Eminescu comme une forme narcissique de découverte (à la rigueur, la découverte automatique) de l'identité virile assumée, dans la plupart de cas, ainsi transférée à l'auto-portrait ». (Livia Iacob, « Une perspective sans précédent sur la création d'Eminescu », *Etudes sur Eminescu*, nr. 17, 2015 : 215). A part le fait que *Luceafărul de Mihai Eminescu. Le portrait un dieu obscur* déborde d'esthétisme, qui distille quelques nuances moins connues jusqu'à présent, l'étude souffre d'un certain *atticisme*, comme disait Eminescu, au sens où parfois le raffinement pour l'amour du raffinement se substitue à la qualité académique d'une science humaniste. Mais, dans son ensemble, cependant le livre offre une lecture agréable, qui incite à la formulation d'opinions diverses à propos des études sur Eminescu.

### ***M. Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension: Chapter 1. (1966)<sup>1</sup>***

*The Tacit Dimension* is a combination of three chapters, which were in-turn formed from 3 *Terry* lectures that Michael Polanyi gave in 1962. The first and second chapters remain unchanged and with only minor updates to the third from his original lecture text.

Beginning with his assertion that “*we know more than we can tell*”; in the first chapter we are taken through various explanations of how we knowingly and unknowingly use our tacit powers of knowing. This includes our capacity for problem solving, intuition, physiognomies skills, the use of tools, the translation of signs to their meanings and even the very fundamental process by which we are aware of external objects and forces through our bodies.

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Many of the concepts seem somewhat abstract and are, by their nature, difficult to grasp or clearly define. A variety of examples help to guide us through Polanyi's thinking. Face perception/recognition is our introduction to the concept of tacit knowledge. We can recognize the face of someone we know from hundreds or thousands of others, but we would struggle to sufficiently explain the features of that face to another person, so that *they* might recognize them.

Here Polanyi's defines and labels the terms he'll later use as footings to form his argument. The first, or proximal, term is that which we have knowledge of, but we cannot tell. The Second, or distal, term is that to which we '*attend*' to, from the first. We attend from the first term to the second. We attend from the features to the face. This he defines as the **functional structure** of tacit knowledge.

Next he defined the **phenomenal & semantic structures** of tacit knowing.

*"we are aware of the proximal term, in the appearance of its distal term; we are aware of that from which we are attending to another thing, in the appearance of that thing. We may call this the phenomenal structure of tacit knowing."*

There is a separation of *a thing* that has meaning and the meaning. The *meaning* within the physiognomy example is perhaps lost to us here, as the two terms (features and face) are so closely linked, so we are given another example.

*'The use of a walking stick in the dark'* as an illustration allows us to more easily distance the two terms. In this example the proximal term, *the feeling of the stick in our hand*, has meaning. It informs us about the distal term, *the condition of the ground in front of us*. We attend from the impact of the stick in our hand to *the meaning* of the feeling in our hand. This according to Polanyi is the **semantic structure** of tacit knowing.

As we use the stick more and more we will slowly forget the stick, or attend from it to the nature of the surface it touches. We will sense the ground through the stick, eventually disregarding the stick entirely.

It's here that Polanyi extends the scope of his work to look at the neural traces in the nervous system. Though we do not normally consider our bodies as external objects, we are asked to consider *our bodies* as we have considered the walking stick.

*"in all our waking moments we are relying on our awareness of contacts of our body with things outside for attending to these things."*

*"Our body is the only thing in the world which we normally never experience as an object, but experience always in terms of the world to which we are attending from our body"*.

Polanyi borrows language from Samuel Butler, to regard the prolonged use of the stick (or other tools) as a '*sentient extension of our body*'.

*"when we make a thing function as a proximal term, we incorporate it into our body, so that we come to dwell in it."*

Polanyi expands the scope of tacit knowledge once again, by incorporating the work of Dilthey [1936] and Lipps [1903], who concluded that indwelling or empathy is the only real way of 'knowing man and the humanities'. They postulated that you can dwell in the consciousness of an artistic creator by aesthetic appreciation and reliving their workings.

However Polanyi is not content with this *dwelling phenomenon* being limited to the humanities subjects. He is quick to widen the potential latitude of this phenomenon to include the natural sciences, scientific research & discovery.<sup>1</sup> He finds himself in strict contradiction to 'the declared aim of modern science'; to establish a strictly detached, objective knowledge.

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<sup>1</sup> He even goes so far as to hint that tacit knowing encompasses our mutual *general* acceptance of moral teachings.

He goes on to use this *dwelling* for his argument against the idea that ‘*as particulars are more tangible their knowledge offers a true conception of things*’. This seems to be one of his primary conclusions; that over concentrating and analysis of the particulars (facts) can destroy their meaning to us. An overly repeated word will begin to lose meaning to us. A pianist who focuses too hard on the sensation in his fingers as he touches the keys will temporarily paralyze his movement, losing the rhythm of a song.

*“this is why mathematical theory can be learned only by practicing its application: it’s true knowledge lies in our ability to use it.”*

There joint meaning and our ultimate understanding of them, only gained by indwelling or empathizing, relieves greater truth and deeper meaning.

He argues that for any scientific discovery to take place the scientist must know, at some level, what they are looking for or that something is there to be found. He cites Plato’s argument/contradiction that the search for unknown facts is self-contradictory, as we must know something is there if we are looking for it. Polanyi takes the view that we know what we seek but that we cannot yet explicitly define it. There exists another kind of knowledge, another kind of knowing.

Before one can impartially place the work and issues raised in *The Tacit Dimension* within the wider field of study in this area, it benefits to detail the professional background of its author. Polanyi pursued studies in economics and social sciences but was primarily known for his research in physical chemistry.

His most well-known notion that “*We know more than we can tell*” is merely this book’s starting point, not its conclusion. If we wish to approach this work objectively it’s also important to place it in the context of the time (and political situation) that it was written.

The writing of this book and other works were primarily motivated by the political situation in both the Soviet Union and Germany. Polanyi resigned from the Kaiser – Wilhelm Institute in Germany in 1933 to avoid the growing Nazi agenda of that time. The issues in this book are framed as a response to the Soviet Union’s (or the communist view) that scientific research and exploration should *not* be pursued for their own sake. He hoped to discredit that claim. The traces of his previous interests are apparent throughout this book, not least his enduring admiration for those working towards scientific discoveries.

*“This shaping or integrating I hold to be the great and indispensable power by which all knowledge is discovered, the highest form of integration loom largest now. These are manifested in the tacit power of scientific and artistic genius”.*

Polanyi claims for tacit knowledge are not modest in their reach. He covers a broad range of themes, from the micro to macro: From arguing that our tacit knowing helps us in the search for hidden truths, to the *majority* of all human knowledge being passed on tacitly from one generation to the next. He even hints that society’s acceptance of moral truth is a result of our collective tacit powers.

My own introduction to Polanyi came from an educational research so it was a surprise to me to find that education is not the book’s predominant topic. Scientific discovery is his focus. In fact there are only fleeting *direct* references to education. However I feel many of his insights have huge bearing on learning, education and the teacher student relationship.

*“The answer is we can do so by relying on the pupil’s intelligent co-operation for the catching the meaning of the demonstration.”*

If Polanyi’s claims for our tacit powers are to be believed then it would reinforce the need for student involvement. It would strongly imply that students are losing a wealth of small and personal discoveries when teachers have failed to engage them. It would also encourage teachers not to overly concentrate on the dissemination of explicit facts but to consider their approach and facilitate learning rather than ‘*teach*’.

It is often difficult to wrap ones head around the tautology of some of his arguments. We are occasionally helped with examples, without which we might be completely lost.

Once we get use to the rather rapid fire sequences of insights it's apparent that the book is very much an exploration of the topic, almost a one man conversation. Because of this, little time is spent exploring counter arguments or different explanations. What Polanyi *does* establish is a language to talk about and around the subject.

Tacit knowledge and leaning is not something to be underestimated by any teacher. We must better understand not necessarily what students think but *how* they think and that not everything can be formalized. A list of facts has only limited use. Something that educators have known (or rather suspected) is that there is something in the *manner* of teaching and the atmosphere that makes for successful deep learning. Above all we must have the emotional co-operation of the student.

*"Its reception [the lesson] must rely on that the person addressed will discover that which we have been unable to communicate."*

It should be noted that Polanyi *himself* described this book as an *Interim Report*. He was acutely aware he might be corrected at the next turn and thus this book, although containing many of the hallmarks of an objective scientific approach; ultimately rejects the typical standard format of philosophical debate of the time. It positions itself as more of a collection of insights that stimulate discussion. The reality is that it doesn't sit within the commonly accepted theory. It sits between yet outside the existing fields of study in the area.

He swings from referencing scientific research projects to unsubstantiated claims on the nature of knowledge. It is left to the reader to decide if these points are meant as conjecture or solid theory. He leaves his work full of missing or loose connections in the hope that we might fill in the empty space. He leaps from '*dwelling in tools as extensions of our bodies*' to '*empathic understanding of creative minds*'.

To summarize he stimulates debate and lays down the language for discussion in the topic, but if we are being objective he does not lay the solid foundation for a definitive theory or consensus to be established. The reader is left intrigued but ultimately we sense the missing something in the gaps between his assertions, knowing that there is something there as yet unexplained. This provides us with possibly the most personal and eloquent *example* of tacit knowledge, which *perhaps* was his aim in the first place.